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NEWS RELEASE

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KANSAS KIDNAPING LEADS TO CHARGES AGAINST ARIZONA MAN

WICHITA, KAN. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced today that **Larry L. Raifsnider**, 39, Flagstaff, Ariz., has been charged by a criminal complaint with one count of kidnaping.

Raifsnider was arrested Nov. 29 in Bartlesville, Okla. and made his first appearance Wednesday before U.S. Magistrate Karen M. Humphreys in Wichita.

A complaint filed with the court alleged that at 4 a.m. Monday, Nov. 29 Raifsnider entered the home of J.D. Crocker, 78, and Betty Crocker, 80, who lived just outside Caney, Kan., and held them at gunpoint. He tied them, forced them to open two safes in the house and then took J.D. Crocker hostage. He instructed Betty Crocker to obtain \$100,000 from the bank to pay ransom for her husband's return and to wait for him at a pay phone in the K-Mart parking lot in Bartlesville.

According to the complaint, Betty Crocker drove to Coffeyville, Kan., where she withdrew \$45,000 from her bank account. Then she drove to Bartlesville where she attempted to withdraw \$50,000 from another account. Bank officials notified the Bartlesville Police Department. That is when police learned of the kidnaping and ransom demand.

At about 11 a.m. Monday, Betty Crocker met Raifsnider and told him she had not been able to get the money. Raifsnider told her to try again and come back at 12:30 p.m. Bartlesville police observed the meeting and obtained the license plate number of Raifsnider's car. They attempted to follow Raifsnider but lost him in traffic near Robinwood Park in Bartlesville.

According to the complaint, Bartlesville police then received a telephone call indicating that a kidnaping victim was at Robinwood Park, where they found J.D. Crocker unharmed. They noticed a white Pontiac Bonneville pass nearby and stopped it. Crocker identified the

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driver, Raifsnider, as the man who kidnaped him.

J.D. Crocker told police that Raifsnider had driven him around for hours. At one point, he said, Raifsnider took him to a cemetery near Sedan, Kan., pointed to an open grave and told Crocker that it was intended for him.

According to the complaint, Raifsnider admitted during questioning by police that he kidnaped the Crockers and demanded \$100,000 ransom. He also said he had seen police cars and become suspicious of being observed by police after his meeting with Betty Crocker. A search of his car turned up items taken from the Crockers' home and a .22 caliber Ruger pistol.

If convicted, Raifsnider faces up to life in federal prison and a fine of \$250,000. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bartlesville Police Department and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alan Metzger is prosecuting.

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The charges filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.

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